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The Optometrists Association of Kenya (OAK) is a national optometric association founded in 2011 registration NO: 33720 SOCIETY ACT CAP 108 & SOC 59338. We envision a country where high quality eye health and vision care is accessible to all people.

## **OAK AGM HELD AT COUNTY PARK HOTEL NAIROBI ON 9<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2020**

### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

#### **EXECUTIVE**

- |                   |                         |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. DAN MOCHERE    | -PRESIDENT              |
| 2. NISHI WAHU     | -Vc. PRESIDENT          |
| 3. MOSES ODHIAMBO | - SECRETARY GENERAL     |
| 4. SAUL WAFULA    | -VICE SECRETARY GENERAL |
| 5. ERNEST ATEMO   | -TREASURER              |
| 6. VICTOR OPIYO   | - ORGANIZING SECRETARY  |

#### **ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

7. PHANICE WAMUKOTA
8. SUSAN MUTETHYA
9. PHENARD ODERO
10. EVANS OTIENO

### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

11. ALLAN CARTER
12. KIPYEGON LUDON
13. BYRON ODHIAMBO
14. NOBERT OKOTH
15. SANDE JAPHETH
16. KELVIN CHEGE
17. ELIJAH OBANDA
18. MUTAI NICHOLAS
19. COLLINS MASINDE
20. BENSON MUTHAMIA
21. DENNIS KIPRONO
22. KIMUTAI EDWIN CARLVIN
23. FESTUS KOSKEY
24. JEMMIMAH NDUNGE
25. CHARLES ZION
26. CHARLTON OGINGO
27. ROSANA CHRISPINE

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

28. MR. PETER M KIRIGWI - HOD KMTC
29. DR. MICHAEL GICHANGI - HEAD (OSU-MoH)
30. MR. RAPHAEL OKUMU - ESSILOR East Africa
31. ABDIMATAN ISSA - MEMBER OF PUBLIC
32. ODERO PHENARD - Rep. HOD MMUST.

### **MIN1: PRELIMENARIES.**

Meeting started at 11;20 am with an opening prayer from Allan Carter. President thereafter brought the meeting to order, where members introduced themselves according to Name, college, year of Graduation, and place of work.

### **MIN1.2: CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

Secretary General took members through the previous AGM minutes which were confirmed by Phanice Wamukota and seconded by Calvin Kimutai and Festus Kosgey. It was clear from the minutes that most of the Agenda discussed in the last AGM were achieved which were;

- ★ Passing and filling of the New OAK constitution
- ★ Complete and confirmed OAK Member registration with African Council of Optometry (AFCO) and World Council of Optometry (WCO)
- ★ Authentic and clear member registration process.
- ★ Website development and upgrade with all members included on the web

- ★ Recognition of Optometry by the government bodies(MoH,OSU,Parliament,KHPOA)
- ★ OAK Strong linkages with other Association in eye care ( OCOA, OSK, ONOA, KAO, OAU)
- ★ Good relations with (Harleys LTD., Allegan Pham., and E.E.A.)
- ★ Creating a bond between OAK and training institutions.(MMUST and KMTC- Nairobi campus)
- ★ Completion and presentations of OPTOMETRISTS SCHEME OF SERVICE TO Directorate of Personnel Management HR Ministry of Health.
- ★ Well traceable steps on Bill presentation to the legislative body.
- ★ Active and well presentation of Optometrist in all forums I.e. (ICC,)

## **Min 2: ACHIEVEMENTS AND SHORTCOMINGS**

Vice President took us through achievements and pitfalls of the association since the current executive and advisory committee took over.

Membership process has been streamlined since inception. Current certificates have unique security feature that were not there initially.

The association has also joined other wider organization namely, AFCO and WCO.

On regulation of optometry practice in Kenya, the association has been able to present a draft bill to the parliamentary health committee which followed up with three other meetings with the clerk of the committee on health and the director of ophthalmic services. These meetings have opened up more options and awareness to explore for us to achieve our objectives as an association.

The scheme of service though not approved it is complete as from the last communication from the DOS. He hinted to us that it is at HR level at the directorate of personnel management, waiting for more others from other departments, to be taken to parliament together as a whole.

Members' commitment through registration has been a challenge as a result of criticism and bad politicking. Public relations from the office bearers was also noted as being poor to attract more members. This has also made it difficult for the association to collect more revenue for its operations.

The physical office and postal address has also not been achieved. This is due to financial constraints that we are facing currently.

The constitution that was revised and adopted in the year 2019, serves as a positive step towards realizing a better society for optometrists in the country. It is an achievement that breathed life, a responsible, active and a promising current leadership of the association. Members are urged to ensure they familiarize themselves with the important clauses in the constitution to enable them

actively participate in activities and assume their roles as members for the betterment of the association.

### **MIN 3: REVENUE**

Several ways of raising revenue were proposed. They were;

1. Registration of all lectures in both institutions that offer optometry courses.
2. All students especially those in their final years of study.

The above were raised by Phenard Odero and seconded by Byron Odhiambo.

Public relations were noted as being poor and members urged the executive to up their game, maintain good relationship with other members to encourage more registration and yearly subscriptions.

Lack of funds to run the association has been noted as the weak link where our external competitors use infiltrate into the association and frustrate the efforts and gains that the association makes.

### **MIN 4: OAK FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

As read out by the Treasurer ERNEST MWALE ATEMU, these were notable figures that summarizes the financial statement of OAK as at 9<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

Income generated from member's registration and yearly subscription= 380 504 ksh.

Total bills which includes, travelling allowances for the executive members, registration to AFCO and WCO, bank withdrawals and statutory deductions= 312 679 ksh

Account balance as at 9<sup>th</sup> February 2020 = 67 825 ksh

### **MIN 5: OPTOMETRY DEVELOPMENT AT KMTC**

It was noted from Mr. Kirigwi's presentation, that KMTC started their training of diploma in optometry the year 2006 with the 1<sup>st</sup> graduation held in the year 2009. This training was supported fully by the department of ophthalmic services, but was heavily fought back from the Clinical Officers other forces.

This is the point where all the squabbles between OAK that was registered then, by the pioneer diploma graduates started with KAO. It has played on since then, with the reason, OAK wanting to safeguard the profession, practice of its members and their welfare, while the latter safeguarding their businesses.

That KAO members are drawn from business persons, opticians and optometrists trained from abroad, most of whom started offering optical services in the country earlier before the trainings begun.

To be strong, to win the battles and succeed from the OAK side, Mr. Kirigwi applauded the unity of optometrists from both institutions. He urged the team present not to relent but work as a unit to counter the external forces as noted above, and purposefully focus on delivering the regulation (bill) and the scheme of service.

It was noted as well that the training of higher diploma in contact lens management at KMTC has been met with controversy in especially the curriculum structure, specifically on the qualifications for the minimum entry requirements (diploma in opticianry). The matter is still pending at the KMTC academic department awaiting deliberation before rollout.

The need to harmonize the diploma to degree transition to enable diploma holders to upgrade was also highlighted. He promised to work in collaboration with the MMUST fraternity and specifically the department of optometry to deliver on this.

Mr. Kirigwi also acknowledged to have received letters from the association concerning the training in contact lenses and other issues of concern. He promised to work closely with the executive to mitigate any form of conflicts that may arise. He gave a go ahead for the association to penetrate the student fraternity for sensitization, to encourage and bring them on board.

### **MIN 6: OPTOMETRY DEVELOPMENT AT MMUST**

Optometry training in MMUST started in 2010 as a Bachelor of Science in Optometry and Vision Science.

The training has been and continues to be well structured with a review of the curriculum done a few years back. This led to a few changes, within the department at MMUST, notably, from a BSc in Optometry 4year course to a 5year course, Bachelor of Optometry as highlighted by Phenard Odero.

He (Mr. Odero), affirmed that the conflicts and battles that were noted earlier on within the optometry fraternity (us vs them), (diploma vs degree) was wiped out. He said this is a task that he started and worked on it tirelessly to ensure it does not erupt again. He urged everybody to direct their energy to fight external battles that are more dangerous to our goal.

He also encouraged members, diploma holders to feel encouraged to upgrade to a degree. He said it is possible to join at 3<sup>rd</sup> year, for one to go through the degree course. This he said as he mentioned that they have had 2 clinical officers having gone through the training from 2<sup>nd</sup> year.

### **MIN 7: OPTOMETRY DEVELOPMENT AT THE DEPARTMENT OF OPHTHALMIC SERVICES**

From the DOS himself, it was noted that there is work in progress on the scheme of service and the Optometry bill.

He applauded the executive for being steadfast, up to the task, ready to take up chances and tasks when called upon. He acknowledged specifically Mr. Atemo who is a participant in one of the committees set up by the DOS.

He also noted that despite the scheme of service not being approved, it is still of benefit to the Optometrists. He has been asked to advise counties that have employed optometrists.

He asked all optometrists in private sector to give their best despite of the challenges and the pressure to deliver, that they face at their places of work. He said professionalism in line of duty is the way to go.

He also brought to our attention that the ministry is in the process of putting all the unregulated health professionals under their respective bodies for efficient service delivery. (Kenya Health Professionals Oversight Authority)

The members present, challenged the DOS to ensure he has an organized eye health sector/department. This will ensure that Optometry issues are resolved. He, Dr. Gichangi, agreed that optometry is an autonomous health profession, an independent profession that works as had been highlighted in the competency framework of eye health workers 2018.

Dr. Gichangi promised to support the association and Optometry at large in all the steps to ensure that the services are delivered well and regulated. He mentioned that he had replied in good faith to all the queries and clarifications that required his input on issues optometry, from the health department both at county and national levels. He is also aware of KAO, their intentions, their operations, contributions and challenges in eye care. And that he advised them to foam the association back then.

OAK members also requested to have a representative in OSU, or in the DOS office. Although Dr. Gichangi acknowledged that, he said we are represented as long as we participate in other events organised and run by OSK. He said it may not be possible now, since we are not in government currently, but urged members to feel represented by virtue of some of our colleagues being party in those events.

On the Scheme of Service, the DOS says, it is at HR level at the directorate of personnel management, waiting for more others from other departments, to be taken to parliament together as a whole.

### **MIN 8: ESSILOR and EYE RAFIKI FACTOR.**

Mr. Raphael Okumu, enumerated the group's mission as having three major components through which he said, they have no bad intensions against optometry profession in Kenya. The groups' mission as stated were; to promote awareness to the communities and persons with eye problems on availability of eye care services and bring closer to them the access point. He said this has led to some of the counties finding the need to employ optometrists to offer optometry services, in

particular Nakuru County. To promote affordability of the eye care services to the people in need and, to sensitize the communities and the society to accept the services of eye care.

On eye Rafiki and any training associated to them, he said they only train optical technologists' level 6 under the TVET accredited program. He said they have approached KMTC to offer the training. And that he is aware of the training happening in Eldoret although he said they stopped the training in Siaya.

Mr. Okumu said they are very ready and intent to support the activities of OAK as long as we have an NDA (NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT) signed by both parties.

The members named the following as the only areas OAK leadership should collaborate with ESSILOR;

-On CMES

-Outreaches and other marked dates /days of optometry events.

The OAK president then brought a motion to members present whether the Executive should engage with OSME . This was proposed and supported by all most members present except one member who never made known his motions whether he supported or not.

#### **MIN 9. OAK CALENDER OF EVENTS**

Members agreed to follow and support the calendar of Events which were circulated to members in the Memo and notice .each group the executive and members vowed to keep the candle burning for the achievements of the forth goals .

Stressing on members subscription as the main income source for Optometrists office of the Secretary promised to organise a better successful OAK events.

#### **MIN 10. MEMBERS LAXITY**

It was noted with shame that out of 93 registered OAK members and over 400 Optometrist whom the association represent their interests only 16 members attended the AGM,this was the greatest demoralising show members have ever shown to the elected leaders and the Optometry profession. Secretary General and the president beseeched Kenyan Optometrist to take charge of their profession not unless.

2020 members' subscription was another shock showing uncooperative behaviour of Optometrist in Kenya.

**MIN 11: 2020 OAK ELECTION.**

The planned November OAK election was made known to members by the chair. Members were encouraged to read the OAK constitution to the latter. And it was agreed that ONLY members with good standing with OAK will be allowed to contest for any elective post and those that adhere to the OAK constitution shall be allowed to participate in the fourth coming election...I.e. to vote or to Vie. The election committee shall be formed 3 months to the event to allow for voting and preparation of the election materials and list of members allowed to vote or vie. And such list to be posted to members prior with option of amendment

**MIN 12: AOBS**

1. In attendance was Abdimattan Issa Baraki who presented himself as an Optometrist. Queries later emerged on his spoken English language and his Graduation school. Sec. Gen then was tasked to initiate an investigation whether he truly was an Optometrists. From Irvine university college of Optometry and report back to members.
2. A member suggested to have the yearly subscription fees reviewed downwards to 2000/= for 2 years.

**MIN 13: ADJOURNMENT**

Their being no other business, the meeting was adjourned by the President at 5: 30 pm with a word of prayer from Susan Mutethya.

PREPARED BY: SAUL WAFULA NYONGESA

SIGN

DATE

-VICE SECRETARY GENERAL

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CONFIRMED BY: MOSES ODHIAMBO

-SECRETARY GENERAL

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CONFIRMED BY: DAN MOCHERE

-PRESIDENT

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